

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Committee	<b>Date:</b> 27 February 2023
<b>Subject:</b> Update on innovative energy solutions	<b>Wards Affected:</b> All wards
<b>Report of:</b> Julian Higson, Director of Housing (interim)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report Author/s:</b> Name: Carol Burton Telephone: 01277 312533 E-mail: carol.burton@brentwood.gov.uk	<b>For Information</b>

### Summary

This report sets out the energy efficiency approach that is being adopted by Brentwood Council for its social housing assets and the measures being implemented.

### Main Report

#### **Introduction and Background**

1. This report is discharging the request for a paper to be delivered to this Committee made at Ordinary Council on 7 December 2022.
  
2. The Council is committed to providing energy efficient homes for tenants and their families, helping people to meet their fuel bills and playing our part in tackling the global climate crisis.
  
3. The Strategic Housing Development Programme adopts a 'zero carbon' in use strategy as part of the Council's 7-year new affordable homes delivery. Where achievable, schemes will be constructed to create a sustainable development with new homes achieving Net Zero Carbon Emissions. New homes will be designed with a fabric first approach. This includes the provision of renewable energy generation via solar panels. A summary of the carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures are;
  - Fabric energy efficiency – to Passivhaus equivalent.
  - Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system
  - Waste water heat recovery systems
  - LED lighting
  - Ground/Air Source heat pumps
  - Renewal energy generation – Photovoltaics
  
4. The Council is further committed to exploring effective low and zero carbon retrofitting options for our existing homes. For instance, ten properties this year

received solar panels and other energy efficiency works as part of the Local Authority Delivery (LAD2) programme, which combined external and council funding.

5. Where solar panels and battery storage are applicable, we will seek to install them and secure any funding that might contribute towards the costs involved
6. The council has submitted a bid to the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2. The bid focuses on 152 of our most poorly performing homes in terms of thermal comfort. The bid meets the national objective of achieving an EPC rating of C in all properties by adopting a "fabric first" approach. The works will ultimately reduce energy bills significantly for residents in these homes. Although the works in each property will vary, the overall project will comprise of external wall insulation, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, windows and external doors, and low temperature air source heat pumps.
7. We are also exploring opportunities for other energy efficiency government funding to further improve the energy efficiency of homes for our tenants and their families.
8. In terms of additional support to tenants the Council, working with its contractor, Axis, has brought back into use two community rooms known as 'Resident Living Rooms'. One community room is being piloted at Gibraltar House with a view to introduce the other community room at Masefield Court. These spaces are not for solely Council tenants and leaseholders but instead are open to any resident of the borough to drop into. They are heated sufficiently, and all visitors will be able to get a hot drink and a snack. These initiatives are part of the Council's wider programme of work to address the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.
9. In conclusion, the Council is pursuing the installation of solar panels and batteries where these can contribute to our low and zero energy programmes. It should be noted that to improve energy efficiency in residential homes, whole property solutions offer the most effective solutions, by which is meant works that combine insulation, air circulation, windows and renewable energy generation, rather than just a single component of these.

## **Consultation**

10. No consultation has been undertaken. Consultation will be completed on individual projects

## References to Corporate Plan

11. Provide decent, safe and affordable homes for local people
12. Undertake refurbishment of existing council housing

## Implications

### Financial Implications

**Name/Title: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Director (Assets & Investments)**

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13. Any financial resources associated with improving energy measures in our social housing stock would need to be met from existing capital revenue budgets. Otherwise, additional budgets would be required, this would impact on the viability of the HRA 30-year business plan.
14. Any large schemes would need a separate business case.
15. The Council will utilise all opportunities to bid for funding to reduce any cost pressures.

### Legal Implications

**Name & Title: Steve Summers, Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer**

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16. The Council will follow any requirements governed by Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

### Economic Implications

**Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning and Economy)**

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17. This is in line with the Local Delivery Plan.

### Equality and Diversity Implications

**Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Partnerships, Leisure & Funding Manager**

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18. There are no implications to note.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

**Background Papers**

None